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Senate Republicans focus on helping small businesses offer more job opportunities for Michigan residents

LANSING – Small businesses across the state would benefit from proposed legislation unveiled at a press conference in Saginaw today by Senate Republicans intent on getting more Michigan residents back to work.

The Expanding Small Business package is designed to stimulate the economy, helping jobs and economic growth return to Michigan.

As part of the Republican New Economy plan, the Expanding Small Business package is designed to reduce operating costs for small businesses by expanding the Single Business Tax credit, provide tax relief for high compensation firms, extend the SBT new hire credit, eliminate healthcare addback and provide a red tape relief tax credit.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our cities, towns and villages," said Stamas, R-Midland, a sponsor of the package. "This legislation will help small businesses thrive and continue to prosper and operate in Michigan. We must do everything in our power to facilitate job growth."

In 2004, Michigan businesses with less than 10 employees created 28,534 new jobs while businesses with more than 99 employees lost 68,178 jobs. Small businesses account for 60 to 80 percent of the net new jobs created annually.

Another element of the Expanding Small Business package would increase market opportunities for small businesses by prohibiting no-bid state contracts, providing hassle free small business start-ups, expand Procurement and Technical Assistance Centers and use foreign offices to expand foreign markets.

"This legislation will positively impact small businesses across the Saginaw Valley and the great state of Michigan," said Goschka, a sponsor of the package. "Our focus in the Senate is on improving Michigan's economy and we are dedicated to making that happen."

Another key component of the Expanding Small Business package includes helping small businesses navigate state government by creating an environmental permits ombudsman, improving frivolous lawsuit protections under the Michigan Agricultural Processing Act and establishing an office of entrepreneurial affairs.

"Future growth and job creation in Michigan is likely to come from new and small businesses of all kinds, and we need a tax structure that serves as a welcome sign to the entrepreneurs willing to start them," said Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, R-Wyoming. "The economic changes taking place in Michigan are fundamental and can only be addressed by policy changes targeted at making Michigan an attractive place for business investment, entrepreneurial activity, and job creation."

Expanding Small Business legislation will be introduced in the coming weeks.